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ABSTRACT

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is a strategy to involve the community in active participation in the development, amendment, and review of the local plan for special education. The CAC originated under the design of the California Master Plan for Special Education. The CAC brings together and supports parents and professionals, regular and special educators, representatives of different agencies, and concerned citizens, to enhance effective school-community partnership. Part One of these guidelines, titled "Community Advisory Committees: How We're Doing Today," discusses the CAC legislative mandate, key elements of a local plan for special education, suggested activities to fulfill CAC responsibilities, benefits of an effective CAC, and characteristics of an effective CAC. This section also describes steps in organizing a CAC, focusing on recruiting a core group, orientation, membership development, organizational structure, participation and leadership, agenda development, and techniques for holding meetings. Part Two, titled "Community Advisory Committees: Doing It Better Tomorrow," offers guidelines for developing action plans, outlines what CACs do best, stresses the importance of effective communication, and presents approaches to conflict resolution and creative problem-solving. (JDD)

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Community Advisory Committee Guidelines

Second Edition

Revised by the Special Education Community Advisory Committee Network of California (SECACNOC)
with Susan Westaby

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California State Department of Education
Sacramento, California 1988

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Revised by the Special Education Community Advisory Committee Network of California (SECACNOC) with Susan Westaby

California State Department of Education
Sacramento, California 1988

This publication was edited and prepared for photo-offset production by Resources in Special Education (RiSE) under the direction of the Program, Curriculum, and Training Unit, Special Education Division, California State Department of Education.

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The original developers of this manual, — all of whom expressed an immense dedication and insight for CAC's and their need for direction and information. (First Edition)

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Introduction

With the creation of Public Law 94-142 (Education of All Handicapped Children's Act) and the subsequent development of the California Master Plan for Special Education, students with disabilities have been insured the right to a free and appropriate public education and improvements in the quantity and quality of programs and services.

The development of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) originated under the design of the California Master Plan and since that time has functioned under legislative mandate. [Education Code Section 56194] The CAC is a strategy to involve the community in actively participating in the development, amendment, and review of the local plan for special education.

The committee brings together and supports parents and professionals, regular and special educators, representatives of different agencies, and the concerned citizen. For this reason, the CAC forum enhances the potential for effective school-community partnership. When CAC members are informed of program needs and involved in the development of program policies and plans, the benefits of the community partnership becomes a reality. As an informed group, the CAC provides the real beginnings of community understanding of special education programs, support of those services, and effectiveness of delivering services to students with disabilities.

The CAC Guidelines have been written to provide Community Advisory Committees with a resource which begins to inform groups about starting, organizing, working and growing. As you *start* (or restart), express a sense of challenge and satisfaction to your Committee members for their involvement... for they do make a difference! As you *organize*, support the work of teachers as well as parents and value the volunteer community as a resource for helping children and adults with disabilities! As you *work*, provide encouragement to improving quality of life issue, awareness, ideas, and program solutions! As you *grow*, celebrate the benefits of exploring and negotiating differences!

We commend those individuals who have continued to work toward making community partnership a reality through the CAC. Our goals are truly attainable, closer, and at our reach when we commit ourselves to working together.

We wish you all much success in your future efforts.

Diana Williams
SECACNOC Chairperson
1988

Part One:

Community Advisory Committees

How We're Doing Today

Legislative Justification

The California Education Code (Part 30) describes the role and responsibilities of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) that is appointed by and functions in an advisory capacity to the governing board of the special education local plan area (SELPA).

Effective school systems must devote energy and resources to informing and educating parents and others in the community about how they can support and contribute to the efforts of their schools.

The CAC legislative spirit and intent are designed to establish a local forum for active parent involvement. Parents, school personnel and community members learning and working together can produce healthy, valuable home-school partnerships.

This section will cover legislative description of the CAC mandate and key elements of a local plan and suggested activities to fulfill CAC responsibilities. In addition to state law mandating CAC's, there is a body of legislative mandates contained in PL94-142 and state law regarding parental involvement in special education. Those regulations will not be covered in this manual.

Education Code (EC) Part 30:
56001 (f) (Local Plan Development)

Education programs are provided under an approved local plan for special education which sets forth the elements of the programs in accordance with the provisions of this part. This plan for special education shall be developed cooperatively with input from the community advisory committee and appropriate representation from special and regular teachers and administrators selected by the groups they represent to ensure effective participation and communication.

56190 (Advisory Capacity)

Each plan submitted under Section 56190 shall establish a community advisory committee. Such committee shall serve only in an advisory capacity.

56191 (CAC Appointments)

The members of the community advisory committee shall be appointed by, and responsible to, the governing board of each participating district or county office, or any combination thereof participating in the local plan. Appointment

shall be in accordance with a locally determined selection procedure that is described in the local plan. Where appropriate, this procedure shall provide for selection of representatives of groups specified in Section 56192 by their peers. Such procedure shall provide that terms of appointment are for at least two years and are annually staggered to ensure that no more than one half of the membership serves the first year of the term in any one year.

56192 (CAC Appointments)

The community advisory committee shall be composed of parents of individuals with exceptional needs enrolled in public or private schools, parents of other pupils enrolled in school, handicapped pupils and adults, regular education teachers, special education teachers and other school personnel, representatives of other public and private agencies, and persons concerned with the needs of individuals with exceptional needs.

56193 (Parent Majority)

At least the majority of such committee shall be composed of parents of pupils enrolled in schools participating in the local plan, and at least a majority of such parents shall be parents of individuals with exceptional needs.

56194 (CAC Responsibilities)

The community advisory committee shall have such authority and fulfill such responsibilities as are defined for it in the local plan. Such responsibilities shall include, but need not be limited to, all the following:

- Advising the policy and administrative entity of the district, special education services region, or county office, regarding the development, amendment, and review of the local plan. Such entity shall review and consider comments from the community advisory committee.
- Recommending annual priorities to be addressed by the plan.
- Assisting in parent education and in recruiting parents and other volunteers who may contribute to the implementation of the plan.
- Encouraging community involvement in the development and review of the local plan.
- Supporting activities on behalf of individuals with exceptional needs.
- Assisting in parent awareness of the importance of regular school attendance.

56200 (f) (CAC Review of Plan)

Verification that the plan has been reviewed by the community advisory committee and that the committee had at least 30 days to conduct such a review prior to submission of the plan to the superintendent.

56220 (c) (2) (Local Requirements)

Personnel development, including training for staff, parents, and members of the community advisory committee pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 56240).

56222 (Local Plan Update)

The plan for special education shall be developed and updated at least every three years cooperatively by a committee of representative of special and regular teachers and administrators selected by the groups they represent and with input from the community advisory committee to ensure adequate and effective participation and communication.

56240 (Staff Development-Participants)

Staff development programs shall be provided for regular and special education teachers, administrators, certificated and classified employees, volunteers, community advisory committee members and, as appropriate, members of the district and county governing boards. Such programs shall be coordinated with other staff development programs in the district, special education services region, or county office, including school level staff development programs authorized by state and federal law.

The Local Plan

Special education programs are provided under an approved local community plan. "This plan for special education shall be developed cooperatively with input from the community advisory committee and appropriate representation from special and regular teachers and administrators selected by the groups they represent to ensure effective participation and communications". [Education Code Section 56000.5 (f)]

The local plan is the central document by which CAC and special education programs exist and function. Therefore, CAC's must familiarize themselves on an ongoing basis with the local plan contents.

Key Elements of the Local Plan

State Requirements:

Compliance Assurances: general compliance with Public Law 94-142, Section 504 of Public Law 93-112, and its provisions.

Description of Services: provided by each district and county office. Demonstrates that all individuals with exceptional needs shall have access to services and instruction appropriate to meet their needs as specified in individualized education programs.

Description of Governance/Administration: description of the governance and administration of the plan.

Policymaking Responsibilities: multidistrict plans shall specify the responsibilities of each participating county office and district governing board involved in the policymaking process, and the responsibilities of special education district and county administrators involved.

Joint Powers/Contractual Agreements: copies of joint powers or contractual agreements, as appropriate, for those agreements defined by subdivision (b) or (c) of Section 56710.

Annual Budget Plan: an annual budget plan to allocate instructional personnel service units, support services, and transportation services.

CAC Review of Plan: verification the plan has been reviewed by the community advisory committee and that the committee had at least 30 days to make the review prior to submitting plan to the superintendent.

Description of Program Requirements: description of the identification, referral, assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and review.

Description of Process Utilized in Considering Regular Education Programs: a description of the process being used to meet the requirements of Section 56303.

Local Requirements:

- Written Agreements: Each county office that submits a local plan pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 56170 shall develop written agreements for those participating in the plan.
- Coordinated Identification, Referral and Placement System: a coordinated identification, referral, and placement system to be included in the written agreements.
- Procedural Safeguards: Procedural safeguards pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 56300).
- Regionalized Services: regionalized services to local programs, such as, Program specialist service, Personnel development training, Evaluation, Data collection and development of management information systems, and Curriculum development.
- Coordination with Local Public Agencies: the process for coordinating services with other local public agencies that are funded to serve individuals with exceptional needs.
- Public/Proprietary Hospitals: the process for coordinating and providing services to individuals with exceptional needs placed in public hospitals, proprietary hospitals, and other residential medical facilities.
- Licensed Children's Institutions/Foster Family Homes: the process for coordinating and providing services to individuals with exceptional needs placed in licensed children's institutions and foster family homes.
- Juvenile Court Schools/County Community Schools: the process for coordinating and providing services to individuals with exceptional needs placed in juvenile court schools or county community schools.
- Adopt Policies: each entity providing special education under this part shall adopt policies for the programs and services it operates.
- Nonpublic Services: the policies shall include, but not be limited to, nonpublic, nonsectarian services.

- Review of Class Assignment at Teacher Request: at a regular education or special education teacher's request, of the assignment of an individual with exceptional needs to his or her class and a mandatory meeting of the individualized education program team if the review indicates a change in the pupil's placement, instruction, or related services.

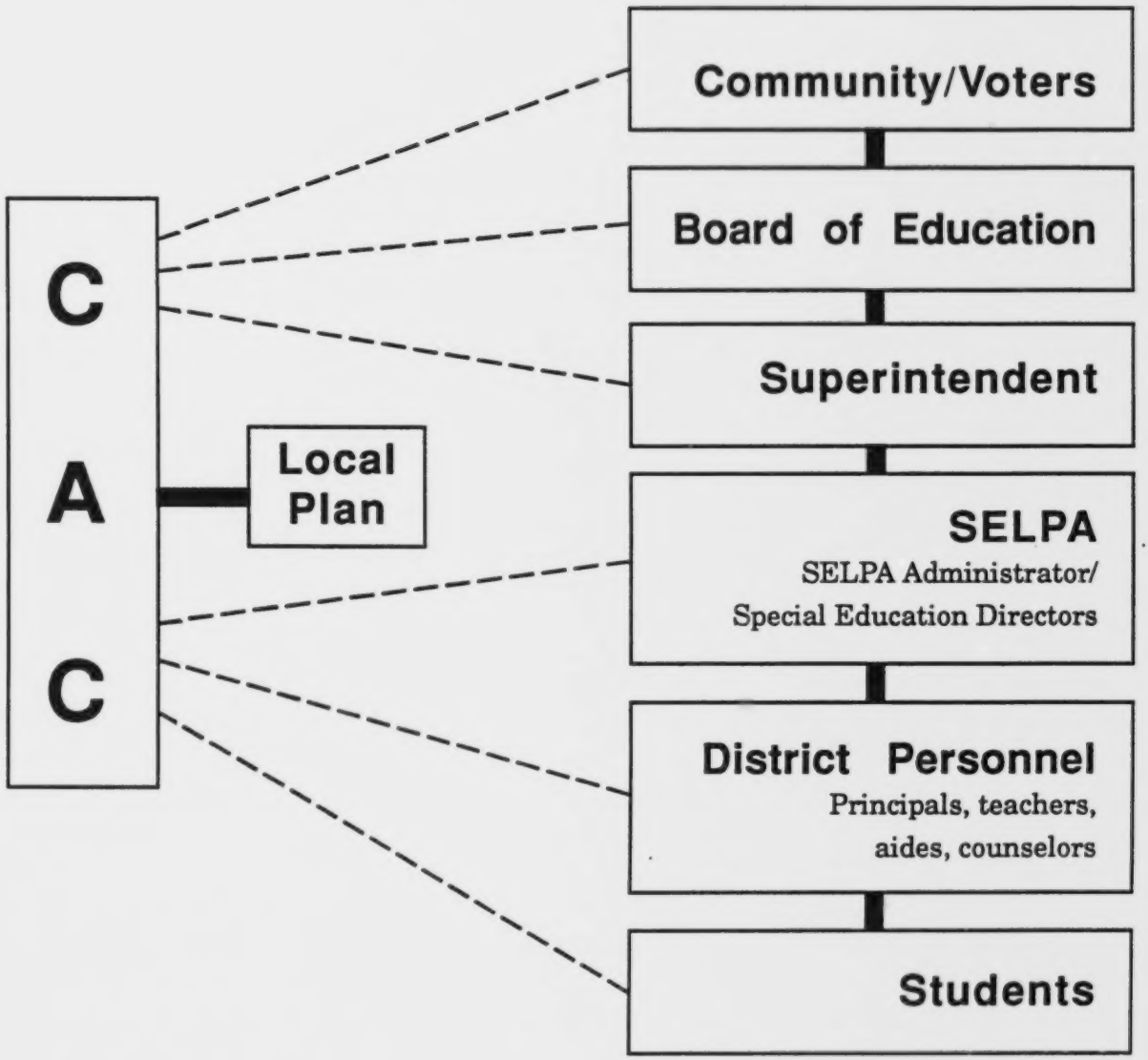
- Resource Specialists: resource specialist pursuant to Section 56362.

- Transportation: transportation, where appropriate, which describes how special education transportation is coordinated with regular home-to-school transportation.

- Governing Board Members/Due Process Hearing Procedures: provisions for involvement of district and county governing board members in any due process hearing procedure activities conducted.

- Local Plan Developed/Updated by Committee (CAC): the plan for special education shall be developed and updated cooperatively by a committee of representatives of special and regular teachers and administrators selected by the groups they represent and with input from the community advisory committee to ensure adequate and effective participation and communication.

Local District Organizational Structure*



*Local structures differ as to size, scope and regional needs. The frequency and method of CAC communication with each of the above will also differ.

Suggested Activities to Fulfill Responsibilities Dictated by Education Code

The list of responsibilities of community advisory committees requires the CAC to continue functioning after approving the local planning agency's plan for special education services. The tasks of this committee are many and varied. The CAC needs to develop a yearly plan of activities. Such a plan may easily be generated from brainstorming sessions as well as through contacts with other existing CAC organizations and soliciting suggestions from the local administrators and staff. As explained on page 6, there are six areas in which CAC's have legal authority. Each local area may chose to become involved in additional projects. A list of suggestions in each of the six areas is included in the following pages.

1) **Local plan development, amendment and review process**

- Facilitate organization and recruitment of committee members (parents, community members and district staff) assigned to review the plan.
- Invite key district staff to CAC meetings to discuss all parts of local plan to provide a more complete understanding of the entire special education system.
- Establish annual goals relative to implementation of local plan.

2) **Recommend list of program priorities to be addressed by district administration and local Board of Education**

- Establish committees to explore issues relevant to annual goals.
- Arrange for speakers on topics of current interest to the CAC and the public affected by these issues.
- Cooperate with the district in conducting a compliance and quality review of district programs in special education.
- Assign a CAC member or subcommittee to update legislation and evaluate ramifications impacting special education.

3) **Parent education and recruitment**

- Facilitate parent inservice trainings on special education programs, issues, rights and responsibilities.

- Sponsor film festivals highlighting educational strategies, program options, disability awareness, etc.

- Actively support local PTA's, community agencies, teacher associations and parent groups to broaden the information base regarding CAC and special education.

4) Encourage community involvement

- Contact local media and community agencies about the CAC, current special education issues, speakers and meetings schedules.

- Distribute information about your activities and plans to local community agencies serving disabled citizens.

- Present information about your activities and plans to local Board of Education at a public meeting.

5) Support activities addressing special education concerns

- Establish special education information network linking all groups in special education and publicize all events through school system.

- Sponsor or co-sponsor workshop on a special education issue of concern.

6) Assist in public awareness of importance of regular school attendance

- Develop and distribute policy statements.

- Develop and distribute CAC Parent Information Handbook.

Beneath the Surface

Benefits of an Effective CAC

Will a CAC be an effective means of parent involvement or just window dressing for the school district it supposedly advises? A significant share of the responsibility rests with the members themselves. CAC's have the potential to make a very positive impact and provide a vehicle for parent-professional cooperation. The following information has been written for the express purpose of bringing into focus the long-and-short-range benefits to everyone in the community affected by the CAC. Hopefully the content included will be an encouraging word to all CAC's working to increase their own effectiveness.

For the parents

1) Parents can have access to decision makers, can have input into decision making, can learn how the system works and can make a difference in the system.

2) Parents can receive information about programs, services and resources.

3) Parents can receive training and skill building.

4) Parents have an opportunity to raise questions, express concerns and share common concerns with staff.

5) Parents lose their sense of isolation, find support and feel connected with other parents of children with special needs.

6) Parents receive education in how to work more effectively with their children in cooperation with the teacher.

7) Parents have an opportunity for personal growth, and leadership development.

8) Trust building takes place.

9) A vehicle is provided to promote cooperation and participation from community agencies.

10) Networking takes place with parent organizations and advocacy groups.

For the district/county office/SELPA

1) Adversarial atmosphere is reduced through trust building.

2) Parents become more aware of constraints on the system and less apt to make unrealistic demands.

3) Parents and staff become positive and mutually supportive.

4) Parents can provide community support to administration, the local school board and the legislature. A vehicle for advocacy is provided.

5) A pool of workers the districts can call upon for various tasks emerges.

6) Community contacts are made which can be useful for vocational education programs.

7) There is a method for assessing parental needs, concerns, and opinions.

8) Teachers and staff come to understand the parent's perspective.

9) Child's program is more effective when parents are working co-operatively with teachers toward individual student progress.

10) Parents become a resource of information and ideas to facilitate problem-solving.

What Should the Functions of CAC's Be?

As stated in previous pages, there are six areas of responsibilities where CACÆs have legal authority. The list that follows is another way that a CAC can divide these activities. Unless you have a very large membership and lots of money, your CAC will not be able to accomplish all of these functions. Pick several each year and do them well. This will build good relations with parents, the community, and the SELPA as you prove yourselves to be positive contrinbutors towards improving services to students.

1) **Dissemination of Information, Resources to Parents**

- Identify services available in district
- Identify where to go for services outside the district
  - regional centers
  - disability parent groups
  - community activities
- Assemble information regarding disabilities
- Reach out into the community to heighten awareness re CAC and special education
- Network with other local special education groups

2) **Emotional Support**

- Sponsor parent support group (which meets separately from CAC)
- Disseminate information regarding parent support groups in community

3) **Skill Building for Parents**

- Through parent education workshop—at CAC meetings and on separate occasions for parents in general
- Through newsletters
- Through workshops co-sponsored with PTA group, teacher associations

4) **Working Toward Positive System Change, Improvement**

- Input to revisions of local plan
- Input to local school boards, administrators
- Ongoing parent input regarding program priorities
- Suggestions of ways to deal with unmet needs
- Input from parents to staff regarding:
  - parental concerns, questions
  - needs for parent education
  - staff development planning

- Attitude change: disability awareness programs
- Action campaigns to support or oppose budget allocations which might affect special education
- Networking with other CAC's and parent groups for advocacy and dissemination of information
- Participation in Coordinated Compliance Review of local programs

Characteristics of a CAC That Works

The members of the SECACNOC Steering Committee have had contact with over 100 CAC's throughout California since they began operation in 1981. Committee members have identified a number of characteristics that are found in a successful CAC. They are listed below.

Relationship Between Parents and Staff

- Top administrators who embrace the philosophy that parent participation in the system is worthwhile and who recognize the benefits to the system of parent involvement.
- Atmosphere where administrators and parents work cooperatively rather than as adversaries.
- SELPA and district administrators who actively participate in the CAC so that parents have direct access to decision makers.
- Allocation of staff time and resources for CAC.

Membership

- Well-defined procedures for recruitment, selection and terms of appointment of CAC members.
- Selection process which produces a representative cross section of the constituency the SELPA serves. Consideration of such factors as balance of staff and parents, geographical areas, disabilities of students served, ethnic background of the community, balance of experienced and new members.
- An open system so all interested people have an opportunity to be considered.
- In multi-district or large SELPA's, consideration of district-level or local-level parent groups which can then designate representatives to the SELPA-wide CAC.
- Constituency served (both parents and staff) is aware of the existence of the CAC.

CAC Procedures

- CAC meets on a regular basis (preferably monthly).

- Parents receive information and parents give input to district/SELPA. Parents feel that real consideration is being given to their input and that they can influence the decision making process.

- CAC members set specific goals and tasks for the year. Members participate in the planning.

- An effort is made to provide "team building" ways for members to get to know each other as people (e.g. get-acquainted activities, dinners, pot-lucks).

- CAC members participate in subcommittees concerned with the review of special education programs.

- Meetings are publicized and the public is welcome.

The Way Things Work

Recruiting a Core Group

The first step in the organization of a community advisory committee is the selection of a core of energetic and effective people committed to the free and appropriate education of all children. These people must be willing to give the time and energy necessary to build a strong foundation for the organization. These volunteers must also work well together, and project a positive attitude as well as a willingness to work as a team with the local administration. An important reminder is that a majority of the CAC members must be parents. The following suggestions are examples of some recruiting resources which, if utilized appropriately, will create the positive atmosphere necessary for an effective team of parents and professionals.

1) District administrators may assist in identifying parents who have been active in the schools.

2) Community agency leaders will have access to parents and other personnel committed to special education.

3) Classroom teachers instrumental in forming parent groups.

4) Local medical professional organizations and hospitals.

5) Professional, teacher or parent organizations.

Orientation

Once recruited, this core group of members should receive some orientation and training. Initially, most committee members come to meetings seeking ways to enhance programs and services for their children. It is your task as CAC chairperson to show committee members that by working to improve programs for all children, their individual goals will be achieved. Orientation and training sessions should provide adequate knowledge of the special education system and skills necessary to be effective committee members. In reviewing this list of orientation topics think about the members in your group and of ways your group can grow with this information:

1) A detailed knowledge of the local agency—programs, personnel, general policies, relationships among the staff and with other governing groups (superintendent, county office, etc.).

2) Good communication skills are essential. Each individual will have his or her own style, but the basics of courtesy, the willingness to listen to

the other side of a situation, and the ability to present a clear picture of the impressions can be developed or enhanced for ease of communication.

3) As a group, you should strive to set reasonable, attainable goals for the year or term of service. Goal setting, as an activity, is not limited to the IEP process. Workable goals insure continued interest among your membership.

4) Meeting dynamics are vital to interesting and effective meetings. Agendas, goals, time limited task forces, etc., all play a major role in making your meetings ones that people will want to attend on a routine basis.

5) In order to continue to grow and serve, your committee must always be looking for new people to broaden the base of interests represented.

6) In order to keep abreast of changes in the legislation and regulations concerning special education, some review process should be set up. If not on an ongoing basis, at least on an annual review.

Membership Development

In recruiting new members, look for a wide variety of representation. The Master Plan is written for *all* children with exceptional needs regardless of where these services are provided.

Contact other parent groups, advisory committees, teachers, and principals. A sample "Council or Committee Application" from one CAC is included in this section. You may want to use a similar format to start with as a guideline. Avoid passing over someone who has a tremendous amount to offer the group simply because that person does not represent a popular special interest group.

The original members may find it beneficial to develop a newsletter for distribution to all parents in the district to acquaint them with the CAC. Using the newsletter as a springboard, have interested parents initiate a contact with the CAC or arrange an informal meeting to recruit new members. Sample forms and newsletters from other CAC's may be obtained on request from SECACNOC. (see Resource Section)

Organizational Structure

Every organization needs leadership and structure in the form of officers, ad hoc committees, bylaws, and goal statements. These are the backbone of any organization. The executive committee should be selected first. Ad hoc committees can then be formed to address committee development needs (by-

laws) or other pressing issues of concerns. All members should be encouraged to participate in at least one ad hoc committee.

Suggested Officers

President or Chairperson (or Co-Chairpersons)

Vice President or Vice Chairperson

Secretary—Recording—Corresponding

Treasurer

Suggested Committees

Legislation Committee

Membership Committee

Goals Committee

Publicity Committee

Program Committee

Local Plan Reviews

Communications

Parent Education

Program, Needs & Priorities

Others as necessary

Suggested Responsibilities

Chairperson or President

The chairperson must be able to work well with administrative staff and members.

The chairperson must be able to effectively run a meeting, be able to communicate well and delegate responsibilities.

The chairperson is a standing member of all subcommittees and ad hoc committees.

The chairperson will be responsible for an agenda and organizing meetings.

Vice Chairperson

The vice chairperson will be responsible for all chairperson activities in the event that the chairperson is unavailable.

The vice chairperson could be chairperson of the membership committee.

The vice chairperson will assume the position of chairperson in the event that the chairperson leaves the committee.

Secretary, Recording & Corresponding

The secretary is responsible for meeting minutes, agendas, notification to members of meetings.

The secretary should always have a notebook containing all correspondence, minutes, agendas and other information pertinent to the CAC.

Treasurer

The treasurer is responsible for accurate recording of any expenditures, i.e., postage, printing, etc.

General Members

General members will serve on various committees.

Application

On the following page we have included a sample "application for membership" form. We suggest that CAC's use a form such as this to help keep track of current and potential members addresses, telephone numbers and affiliations. This will make it easier to distribute minutes, send notices of parent education or community activities, and to fill vacancies on the committee.

West Orange County Consortium for Special Education

10251 Yorktown Avenue, Huntington Beach, California 92646 (714) 964-33

Marcia McClish, WOCCSE Associate

We're Exceptional!

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

For_____School District Date:_____

The district encourages all interested persons to apply for membership in the Community Advisory Committee for the West Orange County Consortium for Special Education. Each participating district appoints three parents and one staff person to serve on the committee for a two-year term. Persons are selected on the basis of their willingness to serve actively and their interest in the provision of optimal services for handicapped children. We greatly appreciate your interest and hope that you will attend committee meetings as an interested person, whether or not you are selected to fill a specific vacancy in the voting membership.

The information below will help us determine your eligibility for specific vacancies that currently exist in the committee. If you have any questions about this form or about the committee itself, please call either your district office or the consortium office. This application should be returned to either office no later than the date indicated below.

Deadline for application_____

Name of applicant:_____ Phone #_____

Address:_____

School:_____

For Parents - If your child is in regular classes, please check this blank_____

If your child is in special education classes/programs, please indicate the kind in this blank: _____

For Staff - Please note your current assignment:_____

For Community Members - Please note your affiliation or interest. (You may be affiliated with a specific agency or just an interested person)_____

_____

Please indicate below and on the back of this page, if necessary, your particular interest in special education. Indicate, also, any particular skills, knowledge, or talents you will be able to contribute.

THANKS!

Serving Handicapped Children in Fountain Valley School District, Huntington Beach City School District, Ocean View School District, Westminster School District, and Huntington Beach Union High School District

How to Make Meetings Work

Goals

A goal statement is a written commitment by an organization to a set of goals which the group will work to achieve.

The committee should have both long-range and short-range goals. A brainstorming session during your first working meeting will bring them out. A goals committee should prepare a formal statement of the goals agreed upon during the brainstorming session. At a subsequent meeting, the goals should be formally adopted.

Aim high in long-range goals. Adopt goals that will fulfill the needs of handicapped children in the community. Be more specific in short-range goals, selecting goals that can be reached in a year or two through determined effort.

Bylaws

Bylaws are rules an organization agrees to live by. Development of bylaws promotes smooth and efficient functioning of the committee. Bylaws are particularly necessary if there is any dissension within a group.

Most organizations have the same basic rules, hence their bylaws are essentially the same. Keep them short, simple, and to the point. A sample bylaw format is included on the next pages.

The major points in the preceding pages are excerpted from *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle and David Straus, 1976, Playboy Press, Chicago, IL. Reprinted by permission of The Berkley Publishing Group..

BYLAWS — SAMPLE FORMAT

Bylaws are rules an organization such as CAC's agrees to live by. Bylaws promote smooth and efficient functioning of the committee. Use this worksheet to review your own bylaws. These components are standard with most organizations but you may want to adapt to fit your own needs.

We have this	Need to Revise	Need to add

ARTICLE:

I. NAME of the Organization

II. PURPOSE of the Organization
-KeepCAC Legislative mandate in mind while writing your purpose.

III. MEMBERSHIP
-Section
1. Eligibility (Who may be a member)
2. Types of membership (Voting, non-voting, active, honorary, student, etc.)
3. Resignation and reinstatement procedures.

IV. OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
-Section
1. Composition
   a. Officers (President, Pres.-Elect, Vice-Presidents, secretary, treasurer)
   b. Other members (number, how many elected and how many appointed, ex-officio)
2. Terms of office (how long officers serve)
3. Nomination and election procedure
   a. Nominating committee (method of selec tion, number of members, when they must present their recommendations)
   b. Elections (when held, how conducted, filling vacancies, removal)
4. Duties and Powers (of the individual members serving as officers)

BYLAWS — SAMPLE FORMAT
Page 2

We have this	Need to Revise	Need to add

ARTICLE:

V. COMMITTEES

-Section
1. List standing committees and authorize ad hoc committees as deemed necessary by the entire CAC. Usual standing committees are those which must function year-round in order to sustain the organization. E.G. Parent Education, Executive, Local Plan, Communication, Membership, Legislation.
2. Appointment method (state that committee chairs serve at the pleasure of the president...or are elected by the committee.
3. Term of office
4. Chairperson

VI. MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

-Section
1. Regular meetings (number per year, method of notification)
2. Voting (state number for quorum)
3. Special meetings (specify when they may be called, by whom, and for what purposes, and manner of notification)

VII. AMENDMENTS

-State how bylaws are amended; number of members needed to pass bylaw changes; amount and type of notice of proposed changes; if voting must be at a meeting or can be done by mail.

Everyone Plays a Part

Participation and Leadership

"Participation and leadership must be distributed among members. All should participate, all should be listened to; as leadership needs arise, members should take turns meeting them. Any member should feel free to fulfill a leadership function as he or she sees the need. The equalization of participation and leadership is necessary to make certain that all members are involved in and satisfied with the group. It also assures that the resources of every member are fully used, and it increases the togetherness or cohesiveness of the group."[1]

This section will provide a brief overview of roles, leadership and membership. It is helpful for CAC's to have a basic understanding of the principles of group processes. This knowledge enables group members and leadership to look objectively at the overall roles played by individuals or shared by group members at different points—these roles are all needed for a smooth functioning, effective group.

Leadership is best thought of as a group function where most members contribute to the achievement of group goals, maintenance and growth of the group. Most CAC groups identify their leader and name the person in a formal leadership position. However, it is important for group members to be familiar with leadership 'styles.' There are many styles and no specific 'right' style. What is right is what helps the group achieve its goals.

A well-rounded leader will prefer to use different styles for a specific issue or process. For instance, directing, (how and when things will be done) coaching, (provide support and encouragement), facilitating, (mediates and harmonizes) and delegating (assigning responsibility).

[1] *Joining Together: Group theory and group skills.* David W. Johnson/Frank P. Johnson. ©1975. Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Leadership Behavior

No two groups are identical. They vary as much as the individuals who compose them. Group members need to pay attention to not only accomplishing group goals but also to the ways in which they each interact. Within each group, individual members are needed to perform specific functions.

In group-dynamics literature, roles are discussed in relation to either work or support functions. Work-related roles include those that help the group accomplish things; support-related roles deal with the participation of group members. The following is a list of commonly identified roles and their definitions:

Work-Related Roles

A group member or leader will:

- Propose goals, solutions, and actions; define group problems and suggest procedures.
- Ask for factual clarification; request facts that pertain to the discussion.
- Interpret ideas or suggestions, define terms; clarify issues for the group and clear up confusion.
- Pull together related ideas; restate issues and offer decisions for the group to consider.
- Define the position of the group or departures from group directions; and ask about the directions pursued in the group discussion.

Support-Related Roles

A group member or leader will:

- Attempt to mediate disagreements; reduce tension and move people to explore differences.
- Be friendly and responsive to others; communicate the acceptance of others' contributions.
- Provide compromises when his or her own ideas are involved in conflicts; and will change his or her position on an issue in interest of group growth.

- Promote consensus to test possible solutions for the group; ask the group if the discussion is nearing a decision.

- Help keep communication open; encourage the participation of others and suggest ways that allow the group to share comments.

Nonfunctional Behavior*

From time to time, more often perhaps than anyone likes to admit, people behave in nonfunctional ways that do not help and sometimes actually harm the group and the work it is trying to do. Some of the more common types of such nonfunctional behaviors are described below.

Types of Nonfunctional behavior (behavior which tends to make the group inefficient)

- Being Aggressive: working for status by criticizing or blaming others, showing hostility against the group or some individual, deflating the ego or status of others.

- Blocking: interfering with the progress of the group by going off on a tangent, citing personal experiences unrelated to the problem, arguing too much on a point, rejecting ideas without consideration.

- Self-Confessing: using the group as a sounding board, expressing personal, nongroup-oriented feelings or points of view.

- Competing: vying with others to produce the best idea, talk the most, play the most roles, gain favor with the leader.

- Seeking Sympathy: trying to induce other group members to be sympathetic to one's problems or misfortunes, deploring one's own situation, or disparaging one's own ideas to gain support.

- Special Pleading: introducing or supporting suggestions related to one's own pet concerns or philosophies, lobbying.

- Horsing Around: clowning, joking, mimicking, disrupting the work of the group.

- Seeking Recognition: attempting to call attention to one's self by loud or excessive talking, extreme ideas, unusual behavior.

*Taken from: Carlisle, Lynn and Lesniak, Pat, (1988). Community advisory committee (CAC) leadership training, Sacramento, CA: CA State Department of Education.

- Withdrawal: acting indifferent or passive, resorting to excessive formality, daydreaming, doodling, whispering to others, wandering from the subject.

In using a classification such as the one above, people need to guard against the tendency to blame any person who (whether themselves or another) falls into "nonfunctional behavior." It is more useful to regard such behavior as a symptom that all is not well with the group's ability to satisfy individual needs through group centered activity. People need to be alert to the fact that each person is likely to interpret such behaviors differently. For example, what appears as "blocking" to one person may appear to another as a needed effort to "test feasibility." What appears to be nonfunctional behavior may not necessarily be so, for the content and the group conditions must also be taken into account. There are times when some forms of being aggressive contribute positively by clearing the air and instilling energy into the group.

Roles of Persons in Attendance

Below are suggested roles necessary in conducting effective meetings. You may want to select from these and adapt them to fit your style. If you take time to share these with the people in your CAC, emphasizing that each person has a contributing role to making the meeting work, you may experience less nonfunctional behavior on the part of the participants.

***Facilitator**	Neutral servant of the group, does not evaluate or contribute ideas. Helps the group to focus. Is a tool guide, traffic officer and meeting chauffeur.
Recorder	Also neutral, nonevaluating. Writes down in front of the group ideas for future reference.
Group Member	Active participant, makes sure neutral roles are maintained. Devotes his/her efforts to the task at hand.
Manager/Chairperson	Does not run the meeting but becomes an active participant. Makes all final decisions. Power to set constraints and regain control if not satisfied with meeting's progress.

*From *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle and David Straus, 1976, Playboy Press, Chicago, IL. Reprinted by permission of The Berkley Publishing Group.

A Good Facilitator:

Objectives: to get a group to focus on a common problem and process; to protect group members and ensure that everyone participates; to remain neutral and build trust.

1) Explains the role of the facilitator to the group.

2) Explains the difference between content and process, and tells them they must hold their horses until they've agreed on the first item on the agenda and how they are going to deal with it.

3) If no agenda is made, has people call items they would like to discuss and has the recorder take them down with no discussion or evaluation—makes sure every item is covered.

4) At first, gives as few directions as possible until trust is built.

5) Speeds up or slows down the meeting as needed. Asks the group if it is getting anywhere, should a break be taken. Is enthusiastic—alive!

6) Talks only when he/she has to and then is short and concise.

7) Silences—asks what's going on and waits for an answer. Suggests going on or taking a break only when no one will talk.

8) Is positive and encourages people to participate.

9) Compliments the group but doesn't lie, is sincere.

10) Interrupts the perpetual talker, "Thanks, Bob. Now what do you think, Bill?"

11) Intervenes when repetition occurs, gets people off the subject, tactfully.

12) Intervenes when someone puts another down.

13) Sees himself/herself as others do, practices in front of a mirror or videotape.

14) When many members want to speak at once, names them in order to speak one at a time.

15) With a problem person, accepts what is being done, acknowledges that it is legitimate, possibly defers acting on it until a later time. Reacts to a problem person, using escalating tactics from subtle to confronting.

A Good Recorder:

1) Captures the words of the speaker on large pieces of paper in everyone's full view.

2) Speaks to the group when they need to catch up or remember what was said.

3) Writes legibly and quickly; understands the technical language used.

4) Is not defensive—corrects and modifies as the members say to.

5) Doesn't talk or stare at the speaker.

6) Captures key ideas in exact words—does not paraphrase or take everything down.

**How to break things up:*

a) Listen for key words.
b) Try to capture basic ideas—the essence.
c) Don't write down every word.
d) Write legibly in big print.
e) Don't be afraid to misspell.
f) Abbreviate words.
g) Circle key ideas, statements or decisions.
h) Vary colors.
i) Underline.
j) Use stars, arrows, numbers, etc.
k) Number all the sheets.

7) Supports the facilitator.

8) Uses 24" rolls of white or butcher paper, portable paper cutter, colored marking pens, drafting tape to mount paper to wall. Has paper already up on wall.

9) Transcribes the information into a group memory. Makes a group memo for non-members, similar to minutes.

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A Good Group Member:

1) Keeps the facilitator neutral when it is felt he or she is intervening where he/she shouldn't be.

2) Keeps an eye on the memory to make sure it is correct and complete.

3) Contributes freely.

4) Listens!!

5) Sits in different places to keep things dynamic.

6) Is not negative.

7) Is not defensive.

8) Offers to serve as recorder or facilitator.

A Good Chairperson:

1) Sends out an agenda prior to the meeting.

2) Plans adequately for space, seating arrangements, audio-visual needs, etc.

3) Has good public relation skills, encourages attendance and solicits active membership.

4) Provides initial leadership and then becomes an active participant at the same level as other members.

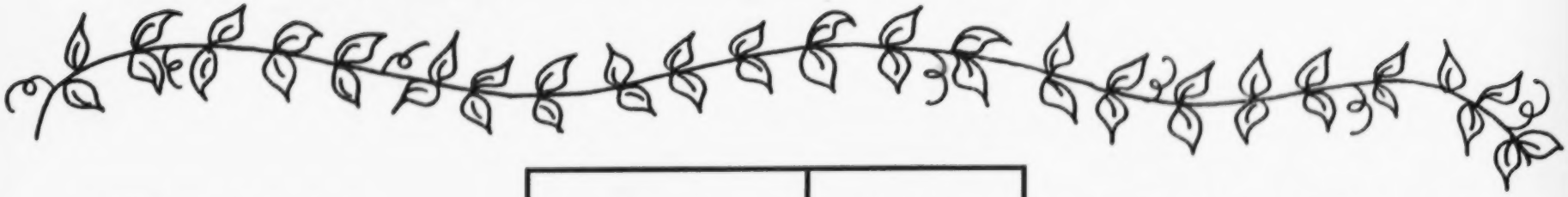
5) Makes all final decisions.

6) Has the power to set constraints and regain control if not satisfied with the meeting's progress.

7) Is knowledgeable about resources for use by CAC.

Small-Scale Gardening

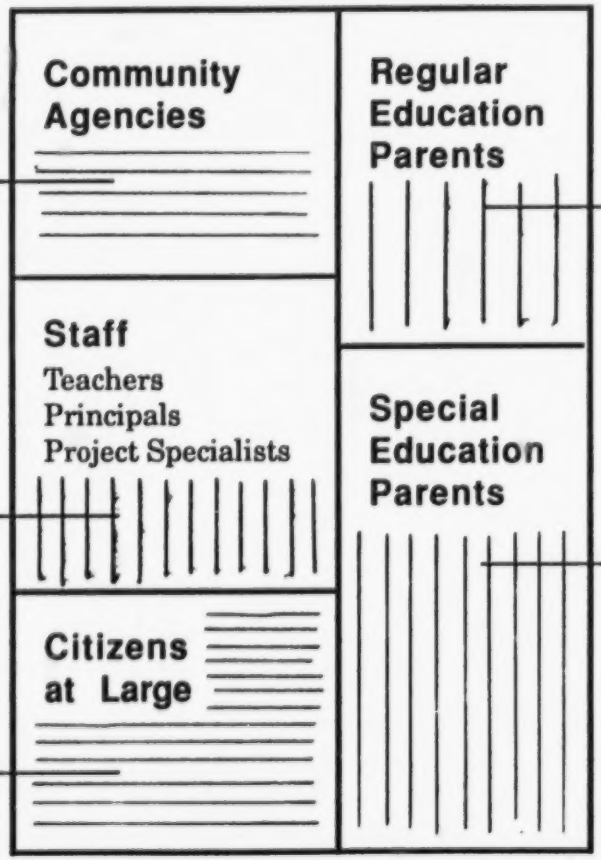
Everyone plays a part in the successful implementation of a community advisory committee.



Utilize their individual group's efforts toward opening doors for our kids—study their function.

Support their jobs and time—appreciate their efforts toward collaboration—gain greater understanding from their knowledge of systems and what makes programs really work.

Plug into their experiences, business/community contacts and resources. Educate them to the need for community involvements for effective special education programs.



Applaud them for being special and regular, for their commitment to all children and their efforts to be a part of community involvement in education.

Congratulate them for wanting to go the extra mile—for by their participation we all gain a better understanding of the unique needs of special kids. It takes courage and a focused energy to work toward improving programs and services for not just one disability but all of them. Support their interest by telling them they are the "core" of this group and their time is valued.

Creating Agendas

An agenda sent to members beforehand makes for a prepared group and a guideline for organization. A standard agenda form assures completeness; anyone could fill it out, and people will know what to expect. Be sure to include:

*1) Name of group

2) Title of meeting

3) Name of person who called meeting

4) Date, starting time and place

5) Ending time

6) Desired outcomes

7) Background materials

8) Please bring handbooks, agendas, etc.

9) Manager/chairperson, facilitator, recorder and group members

10) Presenters and resource persons

11) Meeting method

12) Special notes

13) Order of agenda items, persons responsible, process and time allocated

On the following page, we have included a sample agenda. The agenda sets the tone for the entire meeting. It tells the participants whether the primary purpose is: to inform; to find out; to decide; to throw up a smoke screen; to clear the air; or to do all of the above. A good agenda lets people know that you believe that the meeting is important and that you value their opinions and suggestions.

*From *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle and David Straus, 1976, Playboy Press, Chicago, IL. Reprinted by permission of The Berkley Publishing Group.

Plan That Strategy

SET YOUR GOALS! Meetings should provide members with a sense of accomplishment in a setting that values individuals and encourages maximum participation. Each person should receive an agenda before the meeting which tells the tasks of the meeting and what needs to be accomplished by the time the meeting is over.

Sample Agenda

Agenda Item	Who is Responsible	Action Needed	Time
Call to order	Chairperson	—	7:30 p.m.
Announcements	Chairperson	—	5 min.
Minutes	Secretary	Approval	5 min.
Standing committee reports			
Local Plan Review	Committee chair	Discussion	15 min.
Parent Education	Committee chair	Information only	5 min.
Ad hoc Committee reports			
Bylaws	Committee chair	Discussion (Possible actions include: Refer to committee, postpone for further consideration, or make a decision)	20 min.
Unfinished Business (List each item)			
New Business (List each item)			
Adjournment			9:00 p.m.

Planning Your Meeting

Whether you are having a meeting for 3 or conference for 500, you need to plan ahead. Organization is the key to success. If you take each of the following points into consideration as you plan your meeting you will be more likely to have a successful meeting.

1) Objectives and expectations of the meeting.

2) What type of meeting is it?

3) The composition of the group: who should attend?

4) What kind of involvement and participation do you want?

5) How many people do you expect to attend?

6) Where: room arrangement and size of room.

7) Roles and responsibilities for people during the meeting.

8) Who will have the power and authority?

9) What methods and techniques of discussion, planning, problem solving should be utilized?

10) How much time to allow?

11) Will there be an agenda?

12) Will there be presentations?

13) Will there be some kind of minutes?

14) What are the desired outcomes of the meeting?

15) How to determine tasks, deadlines and responsibilities.

Tips on Planning Meetings*

It is not always appropriate to have a meeting. By using the tips listed below, you can better decide whether to call together the group, or continue preparation or implementation of a decision that has already been decided.

Do have a meeting when:

- You want information or advice from your group.
- You want to involve your group as a whole.
- There is an issue that needs to be clarified.
- You have concerns you want to share with your group as a whole.
- The group itself wants a meeting.
- There is a problem and it's not clear what it is or who is responsible for dealing with it.

Do not have a meeting when:

- There is inadequate data or poor preparation.
- Something could be communicated better by telephone, memo or a one-to-one discussion.
- Your mind is made up, and you have already made your decision.

In summary, creating the agenda is only one step in conducting an effective meeting. Any group can only be as effective as its members and all participants bring different skills and abilities to the group. As a leader, you will want to provide a well organized structure for meeting so that members have an opportunity to participate and develop skills in the process. We hope that the ideas listed below will assist you in your planning.

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Eighteen Steps to a Better Meeting*

Before the Meeting

1) Plan the meeting carefully: who, what when, where, why, how many.
2) Prepare and send out an agenda in advance.
3) Come early and set up the meeting room.

At the Beginning of the Meeting

4) Start on time.
5) Get participants to introduce themselves and state their expectations for the meeting.
6) Clearly define roles.
7) Review, revise, and order the agenda.
8) Set clear time limits.
9) Review action items from the previous meeting.

During the Meeting

10) Focus on the same problem, in the same way, at the same time.
11) Establish action items: who, what, when.
12) Review the group memory.
13) Set the date and place of the next meeting and develop a preliminary agenda.
14) Evaluate the meeting.

At the End of the Meeting

15) Close the meeting crisply and positively.
16) Clean up and rearrange the room.

After the Meeting

17) Prepare the group memo.
18) Follow-up on action items and begin to plan the next meeting.

*From *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle and David Straus, 1976, Playboy Press, Chicago, IL. Reprinted by permission of The Berkley Publishing Group.

Part Two:

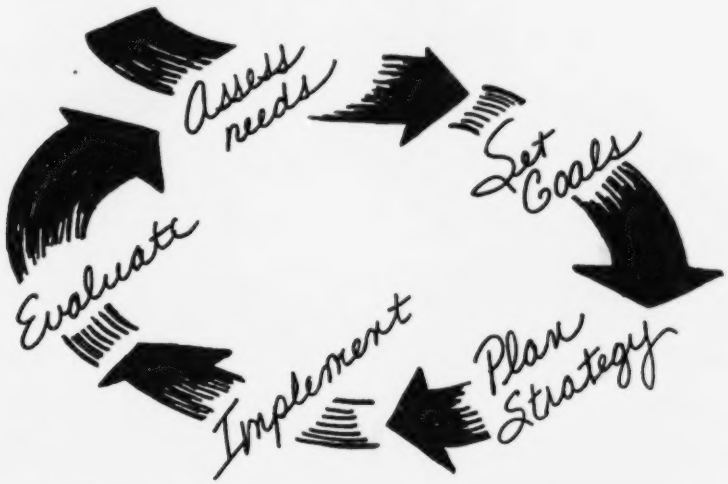
Community Advisory Committees

Doing it Better Tomorrow

Preparing for Success

Effective planning makes it possible to accomplish the CAC mandate in a way that makes group members feel productive and successful. In a sense, an action plan functions as a cheerleading device which encourages a group to applaud itself when it has achieved an objective, however small.

An action plan becomes a road map for CAC's to follow as it moves from where it is to where it wants to go. Prior to the group devoting time on the development of an action plan, it is crucial the entire committee have a clear sense of direction and understands the CAC mandate and purpose. (see Legislative Justification section) Once this action has been established the committee can move toward the following steps:



Steps For Developing Action Plans

1) **Assess Needs**

The first step in planning for action is to focus the committee's energy. This may be done prior to or during the group's first meeting of the year. Most groups can list more concerns than it has resources to work with so it is important to limit the group's scope.

Two ways in which a committee can accomplish this is to require each of its members to list on paper five priorities for the group or use the CAC Needs Assessment tool included in this section.

After a list of individual areas of interest has been developed, the committee can look for areas of agreement and select general priority themes for action. The result of a needs assessment is that CAC members begin to understand the problems they want to solve, the barriers they may face, and the general direction they want to pursue.

2) **Set Goals**

Based on the priority list of themes for action, the committee may next set specific goals that will specifically define an action plan. The goals should be clearly stated and easily broken into substeps. The committee needs to be realistic in setting their goals and realize that they may not be able to accomplish everything they would like in the span of one year.

3) **Plan Strategy**

A good action plan grows from the needs assessment process as just described. It summarizes concerns, identifies particular interests and provides a starting point for moving the CAC through the entire year ahead.

Brainstorming can now be used in setting specific action steps for the group's priorities. (see Brainstorming—this section) It can provide the group with a "list of things to be done", someone assigned to each task, and a deadline date for each activity. (see Assignment Sheet) In addition, the CAC Leader Plan Worksheet included in this section can facilitate the efficient management of meeting time toward activity successes. No action plan can work unless the members are willing to take responsibility for seeing it through. Personal commitments are needed! CAC leaders often end up carrying the bulk of the responsibility for the group. By developing a manageable action plan, CAC members can divide responsibility more readily.

4) **Implement**

Once the action plan has been created it is time to implement the strategies. Members will need to follow through on their assigned responsibilities and delegate work as appropriate. The committee will need to meet periodically to update each other on their progress.

5) **Evaluate**

It is through the process of evaluation that CAC members increase their knowledge of what makes them tick and how they work together. The process of translating experience into something learned is called evaluation. "Evaluation" is a term that sounds complicated, but is truly a way of life. Moreover, the goal of evaluation is to learn what went right, what went wrong, and how to proceed. Evaluating a group's progress means to discuss and consider the answers to the following questions:

a) Why did the meeting go so well or so poorly?

b) What exactly did happen?

c) How do members feel about what happened?

d) How satisfied is each member with the committee's work?

e) What has been gained or learned?

Talk about what's happening! If the CAC uses a "group memory system" (included in this section), the CAC leadership may want to take time to look at these records at year end to evaluate what's happened and how activities proceeded.

Evaluation provides tremendous advantages and insight for future committee priorities, plans and successes.

Some Guidelines Which Are Helpful in Planning

It takes time to plan. Time needs to be set aside specifically to work on planning or it will never happen.

Always keep the CAC legislative mandate and purpose in mind. All the plans you make should relate directly to that purpose.

Plans shouldn't be cast in concrete. They must be flexible so that if things don't happen as expected, the plan can be changed. Plans should be evaluated and revised as needed.

It is better to make simple plans that are attainable.

If you have difficulty getting others interested in planning, use the steps yourself.

A Few Words on *Group Memory System**

CAC members can think well together when they have a common memory. A common memory is provided by making it possible for each member to see what ideas the group has already considered. A common form of a group memory system is the use of a flip chart and felt tip markers. A good memory system will:

- Be visible to all group members.
- Be maintained simultaneously with the committee's thought process.
- Accurately reflect the statements of the group members.

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The person who writes on the flip chart is called a recorder. Details on the job of the recorder is contained in the section entitled "Everyone Plays a Part". The CAC chair may be the recorder, however this task may be delegated to any group member who wishes to write. A smart group leader knows that no matter how experienced members are in working together, they never outgrow their need for a memory system.

After the meeting, the charts are collected and saved for display at the beginning of the next session. You may want to make a typed copy of the chart for each member. Charts need to be copied as precisely as possible. These copies of the charts can become the working minutes of the meeting. Later you may need to draft a final report for publication.

A Few Words on *Brainstorming

Often a CAC will need to gather a large amount of information prior to problem solving, decision making and planning. A CAC leader may want to inspire creativity within the committee's members toward these activities. A "brainstorming" procedure can simply provide two functions — 1) generates a large amount of ideas quickly and 2) evaluates the quality of ideas. With both functions accomplished a group will usually yield a higher quality decision.

First, post flip chart sheets of paper on a wall and have felt tip markers available. The CAC leader will name the subject about which a variety of options or ideas are needed and provides the group with an allotted time for the brainstorming session. The process begins with the group listing as many ideas as possible, as fast as the ideas can be said, the recorder writes them on the flip chart. The basic rule is that no ideas can be evaluated, judged or criticized in any way. All ideas are accepted.

When the period of time for brainstorming has ended, the group members select from the list those ideas that they think are most worthy of further exploration and improvement.

Determining Group Needs

As stated in the beginning of this section, the first step in planning for action is to focus the committee's energy. Between the functions included in the CAC legislative authority and the members good ideas, your CAC could accomplish nothing by trying to do too much. The needs assessment on the following pages will assist in focusing the group on the tasks that interest or have commitment from the most members.

This needs assessment can be used at the end of the year to plan strategy for the next year's operation, or if many new members will be added over the summer, we suggest you use it prior to or at the first meeting. In any case, send it out with the agenda and invite your members to fill it out before the meeting. This is a great way to inform the SELPA of the areas where parents need training.

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Sample Format for CAC Needs Assessment

Directions: Please circle each item on the scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) indicating level of interest.

		Level of Interest					
	(low)	1	2	3	4	5	(high)
Local Plan/Legislation							
Skills							
1) Using and understanding the education code/federal regulations		1	2	3	4	5	
2) Using and understanding the local plan		1	2	3	4	5	
3) Understanding and being involved in the legislative process		1	2	3	4	5	
4) Using and understanding the special education system		1	2	3	4	5	
5) Understanding the CAC legislative mandate and function		1	2	3	4	5	
6) Understanding the SELPA governance structure		1	2	3	4	5	
7) Understanding fiscal issues relating to special education		1	2	3	4	5	
Topics							
1) Legislative history (federal and state laws in special education)		1	2	3	4	5	
2) Components of the local plan		1	2	3	4	5	
3) What court decisions have impacted special education?		1	2	3	4	5	
4) Special education policies and procedures		1	2	3	4	5	
5) How to have a voice in legislation		1	2	3	4	5	
6) How and who to write letters regarding new and proposed legislation		1	2	3	4	5	
7) What is a special education local plan area (SELPA)?		1	2	3	4	5	
8) Sources of revenue for special education and distribution		1	2	3	4	5	
9) What is the community advisory committee?		1	2	3	4	5	

CAC Needs Assessment continued

Level of Interest

(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

Parent Education Systems Inservice

Skills

1)	Using and understanding the IEP process	1	2	3	4	5
2)	Improving local programs and services	1	2	3	4	5
3)	Effective communication	1	2	3	4	5
4)	Effective participation in CAC	1	2	3	4	5
5)	Understanding my child's abilities and disabilities	1	2	3	4	5
6)	Improving communication between home and school	1	2	3	4	5
7)	Understanding the components of an IEP (goals, objectives, testing data)	1	2	3	4	5
8)	Identifying vocational/career education activities for my child	1	2	3	4	5
9)	Using and understanding special education acronyms (RSP, DIS, SDC, LRE)	1	2	3	4	5
10)	Understanding parent/child rights and responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
11)	Using community resources for support	1	2	3	4	5

Topics

1)	Advocating for your child's needs	1	2	3	4	5
2)	How to write an IEP	1	2	3	4	5
3)	Tapping community resource services	1	2	3	4	5
4)	Alphabet Soup! (RSP, DIS, SDC, LRE)	1	2	3	4	5
5)	How to build a better teacher-parent / parent-teacher relationship	1	2	3	4	5
6)	What is my child about? (social, emotional, physical, education needs)	1	2	3	4	5
7)	Why is participation in CAC so important for me?	1	2	3	4	5
8)	How to be an effective participant at an IEP meeting	1	2	3	4	5
9)	Planning for life (vocational/career educational activities)	1	2	3	4	5
10)	How does the educational system work? (state to local) (regular and special)	1	2	3	4	5

CAC Needs Assessment continued

		Level of Interest					
	(low)	1	2	3	4	5	(high)
Projects							
1) Fundraising and grant writing for special projects		1	2	3	4	5	
2) Parent workshops		1	2	3	4	5	
3) Public relations day (special education)		1	2	3	4	5	
4) Parent-professional collaboration training (working together)		1	2	3	4	5	
5) Parent support groups		1	2	3	4	5	
6) Written procedural manual on CAC		1	2	3	4	5	
7) Parent information flyers		1	2	3	4	5	
8) IEP day seminar		1	2	3	4	5	
9) CAC newsletter development and distribution		1	2	3	4	5	
10) CAC handbook/brochure development and distribution		1	2	3	4	5	
11) Communicating with other CAC's		1	2	3	4	5	
12) Attending statewide conferences, task force meetings (special education)		1	2	3	4	5	
13) How to recognize a good program when you see it (program quality evaluation)		1	2	3	4	5	
14) Communicating with PTA, principal and teacher groups within the district		1	2	3	4	5	
15) Communicating with school boards within your area		1	2	3	4	5	
Topics For CAC Meetings/Other							
1) How to effectively review a local plan		1	2	3	4	5	
2) Who are lobbyists? (special areas)		1	2	3	4	5	
3) How to give presentations (and good advice) to your school board		1	2	3	4	5	
4) Listings: special education classes and services in your district		1	2	3	4	5	
5) Working with regular education (building site level)		1	2	3	4	5	
6) Agencies in the community (Regional Centers, Area Boards, etc.)		1	2	3	4	5	
7) Monthly information on inservices provided in the area and outside		1	2	3	4	5	
8) Overview of an issue (least restrictive environment, graduation requirements, mainstreaming, transition (school to work)		1	2	3	4	5	

CAC Needs Assessment continued

		Level of Interest					
		(low) 1	2	3	4	5	(high)
9)	What do people do? (resource, program specialists, special ed directors, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	
10)	*Other. . .*That you may be interested in	1	2	3	4	5	

_____

_____

_____

District:_____

Role: Student (Check one) ( ) Regular Education ( ) Special Education
Parent (Check one) ( ) Regular Education ( ) Special Education
Staff (Check one) ( ) Regular Education ( ) Special Education
Agency _____

Other: _____

Assignment Sheet

Person responsible	Activity	Timeline

CAC Leader Plan Worksheet

Meeting	List key activities for agenda	Time needed
Date: Time: Place:	A. B. C. D. E.	
Date: Time: Place:	A. B. C. D. E.	

What CAC's Do Best

CAC Team Building Through Orientation

Once new CAC members are appointed, they need orientation. This provides the information needed to assume the tasks and responsibilities of membership and an opportunity to meet and establish working relationships with other members. Develop and distribute CAC membership manuals before the orientation session so that members will have time to become familiar with the contents. The orientation session provides an opportunity for new and returning CAC members to ask questions.

Team building begins at orientation, so plan time and ways for members to get acquainted. (see activity—Effective Communication Section) You may decide to spend an entire meeting on orientation or have it before or during a meeting. An effective practice has been to plan time at your first yearly meeting. While new CAC members may be appointed at any time during the year it has also proven effective for CAC leadership to take time to orientate individual members as needed.

After the initial orientation, involve new members in committee work as soon as possible. On-the-job experience prepares new members quickly and effectively.

CAC Membership Manual Contents

The suggested contents for a CAC Membership Manual to give out at orientation sessions is listed bellow.

Organization purpose: CAC mandate (Education Code Section 56190)
CAC local plan description

Committee bylaws

Geographical area served: List school districts

Summary of past year's goals and accomplishments

Minutes of last meeting

List of members with addresses and home/business phone numbers

List of committee officers and committee assignments

Schedule of meetings: times and places

List of common terms: What is a local plan?
What is SELPA?
What is a RLA?

CAC Actions and Their Effects

CAC's have an opportunity to make impact on district policy and educational decision making for children. CACs also have a powerful effect on families and the community. When you take action remember there is a result and effect on those around you. Here are some examples of effective activities that CAC's can engage in and the effect they could have on the district, parents and children.

Action:	Effects on District: / Effects on Parent/Child:
Act as a parent ombudsman to lend an understanding ear to any parent who may be troubled regarding the child. Provide them appropriate direction and follow through.	District personnel gain a better informed parent and will thereby be able to make better decisions with the parents regarding the child. Creates an open communication line for parents and students. The special education student will be better prepared to lead a more normal life. He/she will discover greater acceptance.
Build a cooperative relationship between regular and special education. This includes administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Setting up workshops, conferences, etc., with the many groups such as PTA and the school site council will serve as one way to accomplish this.	Improve teaching conditions for all teachers thus creating a better atmosphere for learning. Remove special education from the closet. Creates an open communication line for parents and students. The special education student will be better prepared to lead a more normal life. He/she will discover greater acceptance.
Educate the community about the problems facing our older youth in special education, and facilitate the interaction of existing programs as possible solutions, i.e., drug and alcohol abuse, community colleges, Department of Rehabilitation.	Improve the teaching atmosphere. Improve academic performance. Provide consistent services after graduation. Improve home atmosphere. Increase probability of child becoming successful in the community.

CAC Actions and Their Effects, continued

Action:	Effects on District: / Effects on Parent/Child:
Work to improve coordination between all community and district efforts, making use of the many services available; publicize to increase awareness.	Educated and informed parents are great assets to a program. Increases services to child and communication among parents, teachers and other community service providers.
Assist the parent in coordinating the child's school program with other community programs. This may or may not be included in the IEP.	When all the needs of a child are being addressed, the teacher has a more productive student. Provides for a more successful educational program. Provides the parent with a total support system. Home and school can work together towards success.
Be available to serve as a parent liaison in an IEP team at parent's request. Involvement prior to the actual meeting is imperative to be fully informed and able to clarify positions for the parent.	May prevent repetitive meetings or an unnecessary due process hearing. Greater chance of reaching a decision which is satisfactory to all. Provides parents with a clear understanding of meeting, giving them an opportunity to competently weigh all information. The child does not become a pawn.

CAC "Popcorn"— Tips From CAC Chairs

Community advisory committee leadership responsible for implementing changes within their committees encounter situations that can potentially produce negative results or positive new opportunities. With this in mind, leaders need knowledge, skill, experience and support. Listed on the next few pages are kernels of experience; ideas from CAC leaders who have been there and survived! When we are open to learning from others and open to listening to voices of experience, CAC leadership can become inspiring, motivating and less time is spent on reinventing the wheel, in essence, everyone gains.

We thank the CAC leaders and members who have openly shared their positive and negative experiences, outcomes of those experiences, and their ideas for improvement.

Beginning...

New beginnings are started and restarted throughout a committee's lifetime. Take heart!

Team building begins with orientation, so plan time and ways for members to get acquainted.

It is a very common occurrence to have new members feeling that they don't have the slightest idea of what is going on.

A committee who welcomes new members by telling them that there is group agreement on the importance of asking questions and speaking establishes positive expectations for new members.

As a CAC leader, build a strong foundation for your committee by taking time to discuss and better understand the CAC mandate and function in your community. [Education Code Section 56194]

Be sure that all members understand that the CAC is not simply a forum to air grievances.

During the first year, the committee may want to limit their functions. A good start is to develop bylaws, a parent handbook, procedures for communicating with others, and recruitment of new members.

Organizing...

CAC is a place for parents and teachers to learn together about special education programs and services within their community.

Within the structure of the committee, set up subcommittees which can zero in on specific tasks, for example: Local plan review; Parent education; Communications; Membership; Program, needs and priorities. From time to time there may be a need to set up ad hoc committees which may be short lived, for example: Policy review; Graduation standards criteria; Special education forms review (assessment and IEP plan documents, etc.).

As members are recruited, be certain to provide adequate orientation. Notebooks should be provided which contain all of the information needed for reference to fill specific roles.

Be sure that the CAC has some designated responsibilities, goals, or projects. In the stages of early organization, the administration may be able to suggest some worthwhile projects.

The committee who has answered the questions: "Who are we and how do we function?" is then ready for the next question: "What do we want to be and how do we want to function?"

The broader your base of information, the greater your chances to successfully influence those requiring your advice.

Working...

Spend quality time on learning about federal, state and legal mandates and the process for special education students and parents.

Be aware of the available resources for information and training, and make use of them.

It is surprising how often groups can continue meeting without ever taking time to be sure that everyone shares an understanding of why the meetings are taking place.

Helping members to identify and meet their personal self-interest needs within a group is essential in order to avoid indifference.

Encourage district representation to all CAC meetings. Invite them to share at your meetings the specific aspects of their district programs and services.

Establish open and frequent appointments between the administrators and CAC chairperson.

Be aware of what interest and concerns the community has and direct some effort toward these areas.

Growing...

Reward and Celebrate! Relax with your CAC year's accomplishments no matter how small they may seem.

CAC members must be able to look beyond their own personal needs. They should be concerned with the welfare of all children served by special education.

People need to have a sense of their own value within a group and they need to feel that they have contributed toward accomplishing group goals.

Regular support and encouragement from the leadership can make the difference between apathy and enthusiasm.

One of the most important things I have learned in chairing a CAC is the fine art of negotiation. To succeed, I have found that we must each be willing to look at the others' priorities, try to understand their perspective and move forward to achieve a common goal.

If I had it to do all over again, knowing what I know now, I would hope my communication skills would allow me to be more influential and my organizational skills would involve more people in the process.

A leader needs to guide individual members to find answers to questions that usually the entire group needs to know. Being a dependable, supportive leader for them counts in overall effectiveness of your committee's activities.

A CAC chair should learn and acquire how to direct a group. Leading a group to a "group" decision and not a "single leader" decision is committee work at its finest.

Effective Communication

An effective community advisory committee ideally chooses receptive, energetic persons as members. The ability to work with a wide variety of parents and professionals is one prerequisite for selection. Another prerequisite is effective communication skills which are the keys to developing a good working relationship with district staff and parents. Effective parent communication facilitates the CAC becoming an integral part of the local planning area. Communication is so important that it may be considered a greater prerequisite than extensive knowledge of the legal mandates. Knowledge of legislation will come as a result of working with the leadership in designing the CAC.

The CAC membership must communicate effectively with the school district and the community as well. You will find it helpful to understand the administrative hierarchy, sources of information and the overall operation of the local school district or consortium.

Communication Techniques

Communicate: Everyone is saying it, wanting it. Communication is the backbone to any type of relationship, and yet, we seem to have great difficulty in achieving it. Effective communication can be divided into three categories: listening, expression and acceptance. How well we are able to listen, express and accept will determine how effectively we communicate.

Listening	An open mind is imperative. Hear all that is said, making no judgements—"Shutting out" will destroy all attempts to communicate. Put aside all preconceived ideas for the time being.
Expression	Be willing to take risks. Express all thoughts and feelings. Put aside prejudices and dispense with destructive elements such as anger and fear.
Acceptance	Accept what is said as valid, true feelings.

We can test our communication skills by answering some simple questions.

- Were you able to "walk in the other person's shoes?"
- Did you come away with new ideas?
- Did the interaction leave you feeling satisfied?

If you were able to answer yes to these three questions, you're on your way to exhibiting good communication skills.

As CAC members, we see a need for improved communication between parents and professionals. Parents must feel confident of themselves to provide the type of support their children need. When educators and parents are able to communicate openly with each other, they will discover more successful children in the classrooms and strong allies in each other.

Communication Tips

1) **Seek to clarify your ideas before communicating.**

   The more systematically we analyze the problem or idea to be communicated the clearer it becomes. Good planning must consider the goals and attitudes of those who will receive the communication and those who will be affected by it.

2) **Examine the true purpose of each communication.**

   Before you communicate, ask yourself what you *really* want to accomplish with your message—obtain information, initiate action, change another person's attitude? Identify your most important goal and then adapt your language, tone, and total approach to serve that specific objective. Don't try to accomplish too much with each communication. The sharper the focus of your message the greater its chances of success.

3) **Consider the total physical and human setting whenever you communicate.**

   Be constantly aware of the total setting in which you communicate; the physical setting, the audience, etc. Like all living things, communication must be capable of adapting to its environment.

4) **Be mindful, while you communicate, of the overtones as well as the basic content of your message.**

   Your tone of voice, your expression, your apparent receptiveness to the responses of others—all have tremendous impact on those you wish to reach.

5) **Last, but by no means least: Speak not only to be understood but to understand—be a good listener.**

   When we start talking we often cease to listen—in that larger sense of being attuned to the other person's unspoken reactions and attitudes. Even more serious is the fact that we are all guilty, at times, of inattentiveness when

others are attempting to communicate to us. Listening is one of the most important, most difficult—and most neglected—skills in communication. It demands that we concentrate not only on the explicit meanings, unspoken words, and undertones that may be far more significant. Thus we must learn to listen with the inner ear if we are to know the inner person.

Effective Presentations

Helpful Hints

As you serve in the role of chairperson of a CAC, you may often find yourself called upon to give presentations at different levels. As you prepare for this type of activity, consider the following points:

- Design your presentation the same way you plan a meeting. Ask what, why, who, when, where, how and how many.
- Who? what do they need to know? Will they understand the jargon? What are their expectations?
- What do you want the results to be? Analyze your needs and adapt the presentation to achieve them.
- Pick our a few key ideas and use the rest of the information for background materials to prevent information overload. Keep handouts short. Hand them out with the agenda after your talk.
- Five to fifteen minutes is the ideal time to keep a person's attention.
- Organize your presentation. Begin with a brief outline of what you will cover. A good format to use is to go through the problem solving process and involve the group in solving the problem.
- Allow questions before, during and after your presentations. Before questions should only be used if you have experience giving presentations.
- You must make your report both verbal and visual; people retain much more that way. Vary your visual with colors, etc., to keep attention. Adding activity or motion livens up a talk also.

Remember When Giving a Presentation:

- Don't read or memorize your material.
- Face your audience.
- Unless you need it, don't use a table or podium—it adds distance.
- Be aware of your body language.
- Be aware of the body language of your audience.
- Let people know what's happening—if questions are ok, etc.
- Be honest about your nervousness, practice beforehand if necessary.

Communication Activities

As chairperson or leader of parent groups, you may wish to use inclusion activities directed toward opening channels of communication. Included in the following section is a collection of activities which are useful as a catalyst for enhancing group communication and participation. In the event you do use this type of activity, allow time before the activity for presenting the rationale and purpose and debriefing or discussion after the activity is completed.

As chairperson, leader or facilitator you must:

- Remain in control of the activity.
- Encourage interaction.
- Avoid having a few participants dominate the group.
- Facilitate the activity becoming a creative learning experience.

Communication Techniques

Communicate:

Everyone is saying it, wanting it. Communication is the backbone to any type of relationship, and yet, we seem to have great difficulty in achieving it. Effective communication can be divided into three categories: listening, expression and acceptance. How well we are able to listen, express and accept will determine how effectively we communicate.

Get Acquainted... People Hunt

Activity Summary:

This exercise helps participants become better acquainted as they match their perceptions or impression of their fellow participants to a list of descriptive statements. Participants are asked to conduct a people hunt using statements similar to those listed below. Upon completion, the group comes together for a brief period to share the experience.

Time: Approximately 20 to 25 minutes.

Group size: Best suited for a group of 10 to 20 participants.

Finder's List

Get a different signature for each item. Happy Hunting!

1) A person who was born in the same state.
   Name: _____.
2) A person who loves animals.
   Name: _____.
3) A person who enjoys sports.
   Name: _____.
4) A person who likes spicy food.
   Name: _____.
5) A person who likes to peel oranges.
   Name: _____.
6) A person who has the same shoe size.
   Name: _____.
7) A person who likes the color "red" better that the color "blue."
   Name: _____.
8) A person who has seen the movie "Gone With the Wind."
   Name: _____.
9) A person who read the newspaper today.
   Name: _____.
10) A person who woke up feeling good this morning.
    Name: _____.

Introductory Activity to Group Action Planning

Activity Summary:

This activity may be a good exercise to use prior to group action planning reviewing the committee's goals or renewing interest after a committee break period (first meeting of the year). The participants are asked to complete the "Statements To Be Completed" list, using their own words, completing the thought. When the participants have finished (ten minutes) the group leader will ask for willing participants to share his or her responses. The group leader may conclude the activity by discussing the similarities and differences among the participants or by stating the activity is designed to help each group member explore their potential contributions to the CAC.

Time: Approximately 25-30 minutes.

Group size: Best suited for a group of 10 to 20 participants.

Statements to be completed. . . .

1) Today I wish I were _____
_____

2) The main reason I am here is _____
_____

3) When I think of work, I _____
_____

4) I choose friends who are _____
_____

5) I think my best quality is my _____
_____

6) Activities like this are usually _____
_____

7) Today I am planning to learn _____
_____

Leadership Behavior

Each of the items below describes a leadership action. Give yourself a number rating for each statement. **Circle 5** if you **always** behave that way, **4** if you **frequently** behave that way, **3** if you **occasionally** behave that way, **2** if you **seldom** behave that way, and **1** if you **never** behave that way.

When I am a Member of a Group:

5-4-3-2-1	1.	I offer facts, give my opinions, ideas, feelings, and information to help the group discussion.
5-4-3-2-1	2.	In a friendly way, I help the other members take part in the discussion. I am open to their ideas. I let them know I value their contribution to the group's discussion.
5-4-3-2-1	3.	I ask for facts, information, opinions, ideas, and feelings from the other group members to help the group discussion.
5-4-3-2-1	4.	I tell jokes and suggest fun ways of doing the work in order to reduce tension in the group and increase the fun we have working together.
5-4-3-2-1	5.	I give direction to the group by planning how to go on with the group work and by calling attention to the tasks to be done.
5-4-3-2-1	6.	I help communicate among group members by using good communication skills. I make sure that all group members understand what each other says.
5-4-3-2-1	7.	I pull together related ideas or suggestions made by group members and restate and summarize the major points discussed by the group.
5-4-3-2-1	8.	I ask members how they are feeling about the way the group is working. I share my own feelings about the group work and the way in which members are interacting.
5-4-3-2-1	9.	I pull together group work by relating different ideas or suggestions and by drawing together activities of different members.
5-4-3-2-1	10.	I observe the way in which the group is working. I use my observations to help discuss how the group can do higher quality work.
5-4-3-2-1	11.	I give the group energy by arousing the group members to action on doing our tasks and reaching our goals.
5-4-3-2-1	12.	I listen to and serve as an interested audience for other members. I restate their ideas to make sure I understand.

Adapted from: Johnson, D.W. (1978). *Human relations and your career: A guide to interpersonal skills.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978.

Leadership Behavior

In order to get a total score for task actions and maintenance actions, write the score for each question in the following tables:

Task Actions (Content)

_____ 1. Information and Opinion Giver
_____ 3. Information and Opinion Seeker
_____ 5. Direction Giver
_____ 7. Summarizer
_____ 9. Coordinator
_____ 11. Energizer
_____ Total for Task Actions

Maintenance Actions (Process)

_____ 2. Encourager of Participation
_____ 4. Tension Reliever
_____ 6. Communication Helper
_____ 8. Evaluator of Emotional Climate
_____ 10. Process Observer
_____ 11. Active Listener
_____ Total for Maintenance Actions

Examine your total score for task actions and maintenance actions. Total scores can range from 6 to 30 in each category.

Any group can be strengthened and enabled to work more efficiently if its members:

- become conscious of types of group behavior,
- become sensitive to and aware of the degree to which their behavior can help meet the group needs,
- are willing to increase their range of behaviors and skills in performing them.

The Fine Art of Keeping the Ball Rolling

Introduction

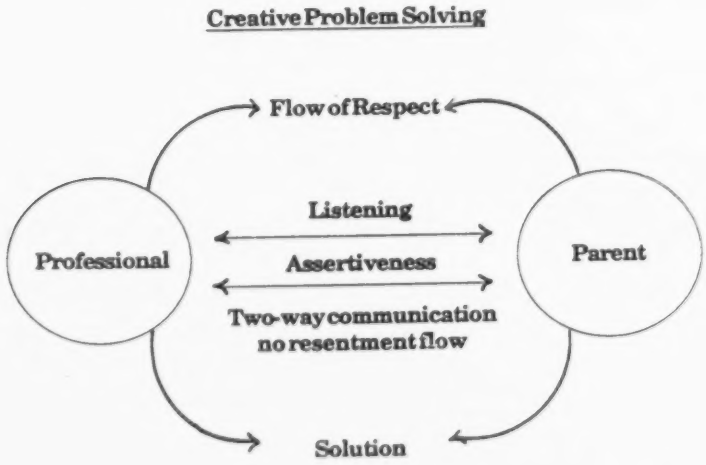
Differences can be tackled side by side. It is possible to be both firm and friendly. It is not necessary to be disagreeable in order to disagree. Lessons often apply across the board: Conflict can be approached together.

A CAC cannot help but gain new appreciation of the wide range of situations in which conflicts arise and in which attention to must be called for. In this section, you will find suggestions of what to avoid and what to do.

Relationships are usually more important than the substance of any given dispute. Perhaps, the most basic lesson we all can learn is that conflict is a shared problem. Read on...for a few ideas on how to creatively keep that ball moving.

Approaches to Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving

Conflict and problems are part of all human interaction. Conflicts can be solved in creative ways. If all parties listen and respect other's needs as well as their own, in order to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution, a relationship can be strengthened. Conflict can be seen as a positive opportunity for change, and creative problem solving can be a win-win situation for both parties involved in the process.



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Assumptions about Creative Problem Solving:

- *Your* needs are important.
- *My* needs are equally important.
- *We* will approach this from a *needs* standpoint, not a solution standpoint. (This will eliminate "selling" solutions.)
- I will *never* use my power.

Six Steps to Creative Problem Solving

Win-Win Method of Conflict Resolution

The win-win method requires that the persons involved in a possible conflict situation will be able to join together in problem solving. There are two prerequisites. The persons must have skills in active listening and assertiveness or "I-messages." Active listening is necessary in order to understand the feelings or needs of the other person. Active listening will allow the other person to openly express feelings and to release pent-up feelings. Active listening tells the other person that the suggestions or proposed solutions were heard and were accepted and wanted. The "I-messages" are important so that the other person knows how you feel without putting that person down or blaming them. "I-messages" need to be expressed in order for you to define the limits involved in the possible conflict situations.

The six steps to the win-win:

1) Identifying and defining the conflict.

   The two or more parties *want* to become involved in and defining the conflict. The time and place should be convenient. All persons must recognize that there is in fact, a problem to be solved.

2) Generating possible solutions.

   This step has all parties generate as many solutions as possible. *It is important to accept each suggestion without evaluating or putting it down.*

3) Evaluating alternative solutions.

   All persons participate in the evaluation of all the suggested solutions. All persons involved should remember to state "I-messages" as the number of possible solutions narrows.

4) Deciding on the best solution.

If the discussion up to this point has been honest and open to all suggestions, this step should be easier. As the final choice narrows, all should participate and contribute. It should be remembered and agreed that the final decision is open and can be changed. Before the solution is written down, make an effort to make sure all parties understand what is being agreed upon.

5) Implementing the decision.

After a decision is reached, there may be items that need to be spelled out in detail before the final decision is implemented. Some of the minor details may be things such as: How often? On what days? What is the criterion for neatness? etc.

6) Follow-up evaluation.

After the solution agreement has been in effect for a specified period of time, there is a need to call all participants back together to evaluate the plan. Sometimes the plan may need modification.

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How Well Does the Group Decide Upon and Implement a Strategy?

1) Did premature voting occur?

2) Were all the members ready for a decision?

3) Did the group make any effort to summarize its progress?

4) How was the decision made?

5) Were the feelings of the members adequately explored?

6) How did the group handle conflict?

7) Did the group explore the possible consequences of the decision from the points of view of those outside the group?

8) Was there a detailed plan of action?

9) Did the group assign responsibilities for various action steps?

10) Did the group pause for refinement and replanning? Did it anticipate potential problems?

11) Are all members committed to the decision?

12) Did the group allow time for a critical examination of its process of arriving at the decision?

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How Well Does the Group Formulate Alternate Strategies

1) Do members feel free to produce deviant ideas?

2) Do dominant members or conditions stifle the ideas of other members?

3) Is the group comfortable with silences?

4) Does the group direct its attention toward soluble aspects of the problem, or does it endlessly attempt a solution to an insoluble aspect?

5) Are ideas combined or improved to produce still other ideas?

6) Do all member participate? Are minority opinions given a full hearing?

7) Does the group atmosphere encourage the expression of disagreement?

8) Are some members overly protective of their own ideas?

9) Does the group have appropriate methods for testing ideas?

10) Does the group search for both the negative and the positive consequences that might be attached to various alternatives?

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Resources

This list of resources will provide access to identified sources of information which would be helpful to community advisory committees, parents and professionals.

Special Education Community Advisory Committee Network of California (SECACNOC)

Information network for CAC's, parents and professionals throughout the State of California. Centralized source of information pertaining to CAC practices, community awareness, general special education issues. Organization provides information upon request and a quarterly (30 pages) newsletter to network subscribers.

Contact: SECACNOC
P.O. Box 335
Westminster, CA 92684-0335

The Special EDge
Published by Resources in Special Education.
Sponsored by Department of Education, Special Education Division, Program, Curriculum and Training Unit.

A newsletter published monthly, September through June, provides information about resources to parents and professionals. Also has several publications with minimal cost that would be of interest to parents.

Contact: Resources in Special Education (RiSE)
Attn: Annette Ostertag
650 University Ave., Room 201
Sacramento, CA 95825

How To Organize An Effective Parent/Advocacy Group and Move Bureaucracies, by Charlotte Des Jardins (1980)

A well organized, readily useable "how to" handbook for parent groups wishing to be effective.

Contact: Coordinating Council for Handicapped Children
20 East Jackson Blvd., Room 900
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 939-3513

OSERS News in Print
Published by U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)

News on federally funded activities on national, state and local levels. Various resources and other information for professionals, administrators and parents.

Contact: Clearinghouse on the Handicapped
OSERS
U.S. Department of Education
Room 3132 Switzer Building
Washington, D. C. 20202
(202) 732-1244, 732-1245, 732-1250

News Digest
Published by National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth (NICHCY)

A monthly newsletter for parents and professionals. Its purpose is to keep channels of communication and information sharing open between communities.

Contact: NICHCY
1555 North Wilson Blvd., Suite 508
Rosslyn, Virginia 22209

Network
Published by the National Committee For Citizens in Education (NCCE)

Catalog published six times during the school year. Provides information and resources to parents, educators and community members on improving the quality of public schools.

Contact: NCCE
10840 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 301
Columbia, MD 21044
(301) 997-9300

News Briefs
Published by the United States Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped

Contact: United States Senate Subcommittee on the Handicapped
113 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

Legislative Update
(Special Education and Related Legislation)
Published by Department of Education, Special Education Division

A newsletter published 3-4 times per year, provides *current* description of legislation and related issues pertaining to special education. A valuable, extremely useful piece of information. Those with access to SpecialNet can access weekly update of legislative information.

Contact: Paul Hinkle
Special Education Division
California State Department of Education
P.O. Box 944272
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(Education Code - Part 30 and other related laws)
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